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ABSTRACT

A first grader of Vietnamese descent (recently arrived in Hawaii from China) participated in the class activities in a 6-week summer course that focused on language arts and mathematics but only found his "voice" and the acceptance of his peers through art activities. The course included many language arts activities such as silent reading, read alouds, cooking, singing, and invitations that encouraged students to read, write and interact with each other. The child's exposure to literature both in and outside of the classroom had given him a variety of resources to acquire language. Four weeks into the session, he had learned the intricacies of language and their importance in communicating with others, but he was frustrated at various times when he was unable to understand or communicate meaning to his classmates. The student used cut-out art as his sign system for expressing his creative storytelling. He gained the confidence to stand in front of the class sharing a part of himself. Although the student's reading and writing improved in a print rich environment, he was not completely accepted by his classmates until he was able to capitalize on his creative strengths, expressing himself through art. (Five appendixes presents examples of the student's cut-out art stories.) (RS)

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ED 373 351

Using Art as a means of Language Development and of Finding One's Voice: One case study of an ESL Learner

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Preface

This study took place in Honolulu, Hawaii during a six-week summer course emphasizing Language Arts and Mathematics in the summer of 1993. Though this project involved and applied to the entire class of twenty-nine students, a closer examination of the effects of such a curriculum on one student is discussed.

Nam walked in my classroom on the first day of summer school and looked around the room. Most of the children had already arrived. He wore a white tee shirt and dark shorts. His straight dark bangs that formed a straight line across his forehead framed his ivory-colored face and small eyes. His round stature, solid physique and height made him look a little older than most of the other second and first grade children. He was accompanied by an elderly man who held Nam's hand, accompanying him into the classroom. Together they walked across the room until they stood in front of me.

The boy began to speak and I leaned over to listen to him, "Hum-aw-yow-yaw-wa-mai-ya-waw-see[1]." A little surprised that I was not able to understand what he had just asked, I looked up at the elderly man who held his hand. The man smiled and looked down at the boy.

"Pardon me?" I asked and leaned closer.

Again he started, "Hum-aw-yow-yaw-wa-mai-ya-waw-see."

This time I noticed him pointing to the tables of children and I was able to make sense of one or two words, "my" and "seat." I walked him over to the group of desks where two seats remained empty. "You may sit at any of these desks," I said.

He hesitated and looked at the group of children in the room. Pointing to the children sitting at the group of desks where I offered him a seat, he said, "Hum-aw-yow-yaw-wa-gayles." Then pointing to the children sitting at a group of desks near the other wall, he said, "Hum-aw-yow-yaw-wa-bois."

Looking at the groups of students who sat in both areas, I realized that the girls were sitting at the group of desks where we stood, while the boys sat in the group of desks near the other wall. Realizing his sensitivity to gender associations, I pulled one of the empty desks from the "girls' " tables and dragged it over to the "boys' " tables. Sitting down at his desk, he unpacked his red back pack and waited for class to begin.

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[1] This string of seemingly nonsense letters within this quotation and others are my closest approximations of what his speech sounded like to my ears. Embedded in these strings of letters are one or two sounds that I was able to understand as English words that he was using to communicate with me, his teacher.

Nam is of Vietnamese decent. Growing up in China, he immigrated to Hawaii with his father, aunt, sister, grandfather and uncle about a year prior to entering my class. He spent his first grade year in the regular classroom and part of the time in a support classroom for children who speak English as a second language. His first grade teacher gave him language worksheets from commercial workbooks and allowed him to copy any phrases he felt like copying. She also explained that his family gave him a lot of educational support, especially with his homework; however, his reading comprehension was still poor. She tried to give him as much individual support to help him increase his English proficiency.

His SLEP (Second Language English Proficiency) teacher was only able to work with him for a few months because she was new to the school. She described Nam as a very intelligent boy who enjoyed telling a lot of stories. However, he often became frustrated in class because his limited command of the English language prevented him from communicating effectively with others.

The only evidence I had regarding his command over English was a writing sample of a story he had written during the first few days of class:

> one Day a cat, hes good cat. his mom love ham. But Dad cat was tasl for work. The naxt Day good cat was very sad. That Day good cat Said his sisther. ham a bug come to said to ham you, are a good cat.

This writing sample shows that Nam understands the basic syntax and semantics of the English language. His sentences are structurally sound in which each phrase includes a subject followed by a predicate. In addition, these phrases include descriptive words such as adjectives and adverbs as his attempt to convey particular meanings to his readers. He is not sure when to capitalize letters in words. Most of his sentences begin with a capital letter; however they are not consistent. Like other students in his class, he utilizes invented spelling to spell words that he is unsure of. Because of his strong accent, most of

his misspelled words are based on his pronunciations, for example, "naxt" for "next" and "ham" for "him." Most importantly, his summary follows a story line in which he describes the main character, the story's conflict and the resolution of the story, showing that he understands the structure of American stories.

Literature on Second Language Acquisition and Learning

With very little background working with students with second language English proficiency, I was not sure how much support would be necessary to meet his needs. I did not know what kinds of adjustments needed to be made to my language arts program, if any.

Krashen (1982), a well-known linguist in the area of second language, argues five hypotheses that describe how people learn a second language: the acquisition-learning hypothesis, the natural order hypothesis, the Monitor hypothesis, the input hypothesis and the Affective Filter hypothesis. In the acquisition-learning hypothesis, he distinguishes between the notions of acquiring a second language as opposed to learning a second language. Acquiring a second language is subconscious by which the acquirer learns to speak the second language through interaction with people in the target language. It is equivalent to how young children learn their mother tongue languages, or when people say that to learn another language one must live in the country in which people speak the target language by communicating and interacting with them.

In contrast, learning a second language requires a conscious effort. Learners are explicitly taught the rules and grammatical structure of the target language and are corrected when their grammar is imperfect. Many language courses are taught in this way in which much of the time is spent learning grammatical rules and isolated phrases. However, although many students who learn a second language through formal instruction are able to memorize rules and converse using standard responses in their language courses, they are unable to speak conversationally with speakers in the target language.

A second hypothesis is the natural order hypothesis. The natural order hypothesis states that learners acquire/learn a language in a natural order of development. This hypothesis parallels a Piagetian notion of children's natural order of development in their first language. Thus, like first language learners, according to Krashen, learners need to be taught certain concepts about language in a particular sequential order for optimum language development.

The Monitor hypothesis, Krashen's (1982) third hypothesis, is a self-correction tool learners use to communicate with others in the target language in grammatically appropriate ways. That is, the learner uses his/her acquired/learned knowledge to communicate with people in the target language. However, when the learner speaks and realizes that s/he did not say something grammatically correct, s/he uses her/his monitoring tool to self-correct. First language users use this monitoring technique often when editing a written document. After writing a draft, writers will revise or edit their pieces until they feel confident that their written pieces effectively communicate their intended messages to their audiences.

Fourth, the input hypothesis is closely related to the acquisition hypothesis by which learning is acquired at a subconscious level. However, the input hypothesis examines how learners move from one level of understanding to the next level of proficiency. According to the input hypothesis, a second language learner implicitly learns the rules of language, such as grammar, spelling, and syntax, through daily interaction with others in the target language, thereby moving from one level of competence to the next. This process of internalizing the rules of a second language through immersion in the target language and through interaction with others is similar to how infants learn and grow in their mother tongue language. That is, though the parents do not directly teach their children grammatical rules, they do model what they consider appropriate language when speaking to their children. Through continual interaction and communication, children are able to acquire their mother tongue languages and move to more proficient levels of competence.

The final hypothesis that Krashen (1982) describes is the Affective Filter hypothesis. This hypothesis examines the effect of environmental factors on learning. That is, environmental factors, such as externally imposed pressures that cause the learners to feel uncomfortable may affect how much they are able to acquire. Different levels of environmental factors can determine the level of risk learners are willing to take in a classroom or conversational situation. For example, in high-risk environments, second language learners hesitate to speak English because they fear negative reactions from others, such as teasing, over correction, ridicule, or alienation. According to Krashen (1982), high-risk environments can also affect learners' levels of motivation, self-confidence and anxiety. As a result, the affective filter will be high and learners would often choose not to practice using and experimenting with language in hopes of avoiding embarrassment or shame for mistakes.

A low-risk environment, on the other hand, does not pose as great a risk for learners as in high-risk environments. In a low-risk environment, there is little threat , if any, of teasing, over-correction, ridicule or alienation. Moreover, a low-risk environment would provide positive support for learners and encourage them to use and experiment with language to develop more self-confidence. Thus, if the language user feels confident in him/herself about using language around others, s/he will probably use the language more frequently, taking a greater number of risks as opposed to others who might feel less self-confident. As a result, the Affective filter will remain low and more input will be allowed into the learner's knowledge base.

Given these hypotheses, Krashen (1985) argues that a language program that exposes second language learners to reading may be the "primary means of developing reading comprehension, writing style, and more sophisticated vocabulary and grammar" (p. 90). This exposure to reading includes sustained silent reading, self-selected reading, print environments, reported reading pleasure, and reading out loud.

Krashen's (1985) argument of a language program most conducive for second language learners supports a whole language philosophy. Within this philosophy,

teachers provide a classroom environment rich in language. For example, instead of relying on one textbook, the teacher will provide more authentic literature such as trade books, periodicals, or a classroom library filled with both fiction and nonfiction books. The teacher might also provide other language activities to make reading and writing more real and meaningful for the students.

My summer course included many language activities such as silent reading, read alouds, cooking, singing, and invitations that encouraged students to read, write and interact with each other. Nam participated in each of these activities, and as described below in more detail, his language use increased as the summer progressed.

Experiences with Print

Sustained Silent Reading

Each morning students chose either a book from our classroom library or read one that they had brought from home. After about twenty minutes of silent reading, the children were given the opportunity to share their readings with the class. There were a wide range of stories that the children chose to share. Some students who had more experiences with print were sharing books that were divided by chapters; whereas, other students who did not have as many experiences shared picture books or predicable books to the class. When sharing, the children shared what the story was about and what they liked about the book. Other students were then given the opportunity to ask questions about the book.

Krashen (1985) says that giving second language learners the opportunity for reading silently helps in their language development. When second language learners read, they do not have to be self-conscious about whether or not they are reading the words correctly because it is to themselves. Thus, the affective filters are low. By giving Nam the opportunity to read silently before sharing his reading, as with the other students, Nam is able to think about what he would like to share with others without too much risk

of being embarrassed. Once this became part of a routine, Nam could predict and practice what he was going to read and share with the class.

By the third day of class, Nam felt comfortable enough to share a book called, "Hop on Pop" by Dr. Seuss. Because of the book's simplicity, it was difficult to summarize the book. Instead Nam described each picture on the page. At this point, it was not clear whether or not he understood what he read.

Once Nam understood the routine of reading books in the morning and sharing his books after silent reading, he began to surround his world with books. He would borrow books from my library, borrow books that he saw others reading, and brought books from home that others had given him in the past. Oftentimes, he would sit quietly for about ten minutes with a book in front of him, and page quickly through the story. However, as the weeks continued, he still did not summarize his stories. When he expressed interest in sharing books with the class, I asked him what the story was about to get him thinking about his summary before he shared with the class:

K: I brough' these all books today Bambi, Batman, ( )[2]. I like this book [pointing to Bambi][3]. I might want to share this book....Hum um I want to show you mm the picture[4].
T: You want to show everybody the picture?
K: I want to show this page and this page.
T: Can you tell me what this story was about?
K: This story was about ( )
T: About Bambi? What about Bambi?
K: They has friends...bunny, r(w)abbit, ( ), raccoon, mouse and da's all 'ready. And the father had him.
T: And the father had him?
K: Yes. And the next page, this page mm his friends...he says thank you for saving my life.

Thus, instead of summarizing, he would choose an illustration(s) that he found interesting or that would interest the other students then describe all the characters in those scenes. Based on those chosen illustration(s), he would infer the storyline. Though

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[2] All parentheses in direct quotes indicate that the audio-taped recording was unable to be transcribed.
[3] All brackets within direct quotes indicate actions performed by the speaker.
[4] All quotations of Kit and other students are the closest representations of their conversations.

his summaries were not always accurate, he did demonstrate that he was making connections between the illustrations and the text. Based on his limited experiences with print, he knew that the illustrations related to the story and described the text through pictures. This over-reliance of the illustrations to tell the story could have stemmed from watching cartoons in which the pictures often tell the story. Perhaps Nam felt the same applied to storybooks.

Read Alouds

After students were given the opportunity to share their books, I would spend the next half hour reading to them a chapter from a book each day. Nam usually liked to sit near my feet; however, he eventually had to sit near the back of the group because the first graders were unable to see above or around him. Nevertheless, Nam was always trying to predict what the next chapter was going to be about. Given his strong accent, the class and I worked diligently to interpret his intended meanings to the class. After about ten minutes of reading aloud to the class, Nam would raise his hand and tell me, "I am getting tired now." Then he would walk back to his desk and begin to read another book or appear to draw or write something on his desk. However, these periods of returning to his seat during our read aloud period did not prevent him from participating with the group. Each day thereafter, when we would meet on the floor for read alouds, he would be right there explaining what we had read the last time and predicting what was going to happen in the next chapter.

Cooking

As with the Read Aloud periods, I noticed Nam would often leave the group or engage in another activity whenever he became frustrated or "tired" with the ongoing activity. For example, on the first cooking day I had written all the directions on the chalkboard and they were to divide the job responsibilities among each member of the group. One would clean and cut the apple, another would dip the apples in lemon juice, a third would spread the peanut butter on the apple and a fourth would gather all the

necessary materials. Nam watched other children in his group reading the chalkboard. He did the same thing, but he did not know what he was supposed to do. Unable to participate in the activity along with his group members, Nam became frustrated. Instead of asking his group members what he should do, he came to me to ask if he could eat an apple. Instead of handing him an apple, I instructed him to read the directions on the chalkboard one more time and talk with his group members about his job responsibilities. However, upon returning to his desk, he did not read the directions or discuss the job responsibilities with his group. Instead he began reading a book unrelated to the cooking activity. It was not until about ten minutes later that he decided to lean over to his group members and begin discussing his job responsibilities for the cooking activity.

Singing

Nam displayed the same behavior during our daily singing activity as well. Instead of sitting with the group, he often sat at his seat. He would either draw or write while the rest of the class would be singing. It was not until I asked him to sing with the class, and explained how singing is like reading, that he decided to join the group.

Why does Nam prefer to read or write while the rest of the class is engaged in an activity? Krashen's (1982) Input Hypothesis describes a phase called the silent period. During this time second language learners who receive a lot of linguistic input go through a period of time when they say very little. They are only able to say memorized sentences because they are absorbing the linguistic environment. Though this happens when many second language learners are first exposed to a target language, it seems that Nam used this silent period as a coping strategy to help him make sense of his environment. In both the read aloud and cooking activities, there may have been too much input at one time. When doing the cooking activity, for example, he was asked to read and understand the directions on the chalkboard, and discuss with the group his responsibility in the activity. When these tasks seemed to require more than he was able to cope with at the moment, he needed to find some kind of outlet in which he could most effectively make sense of the

situation. Thus, by reading a book, an acceptable and safe activity that temporarily removed him from his immediate environment, Nam was able to cope with an overwhelming amount of input, utilizing the silent period to monitor the quality of "comprehensible input" that would move him to the next level of proficiency (Krashen, 1985, p. 59).

Once Nam understood the procedures of the cooking activities, cooking became an activity that he looked forward to. The next time we had cooking day, Nam showed his enthusiasm for the activity.

K: Are we going to eat sub sandwiches now? (Then pointing at the lettuce.) My grandpa bought a lot of lettuce. He bought one thousand one hundred. I love tomato. (He jumps once, claps, runs toward the chalkboard to look at the directions. Then turns and walks back to the table. Pointing to the cheese at the table) Are we going to have this too?

Supportive Home Environment

Nam's family also supported his language learning by providing opportunities for him to go to the public library. His excitement for reading made visiting the library an enjoyable occasion.

K: Um Hum tomorrow...mmy mmy aunty says tomorrow tomorrow one clock her she will um take me to the library to borrow book to read.
T: Oh that's great. Are you also going to borrow some books?
K: Not tomorrow maybe today.
T: Oh today. Oh how exciting.
K: Tomorrow Thursday I will bring...going to bring dis book to read and /so/[5] it to the class. This book is a beautiful book...Hum some book is all um flower and some book is calls some ( ) and /tings/.
T: Some books are called flowers, some are classed bugs and things?
K: And /everytings/.
T: Oh that sounds exciting.
K: And some book is calls the dragon...I know the book already. I found it at...the books called the dragon. It's so easy to read.
T: Then you should tell us about it. You should tell us what the book is about.
K: Hum the dragon was lots of baby but then hum hum then the baby dragon never come home already but they lost from a bad dragon. Hum he thinks

[5] These diagonal brackets represent the phonetic representation of how Kit sounded out the actual word.

that house is his mother's dragon. Them...oh...that dragon come to hum he want to go eat him.
T: Sounds like a very scary story.
K: Yea. It's called the drag...the bad dragon.

It is not clear how he knows about these stories before going to the library. Perhaps he had already borrowed the book before or someone had read the stories to him. Nevertheless, his anticipation and hopes of sharing something the following day is evident in the conversation. However, the next day when I opened the door, Nam was sobbing. Amidst his crying and gasping for breath, he was able to piece together his most unfortunate news.

T: What's wrong?
K: My grandma don't let me take a library book to read.
T: Oh your grandma didn't let you bring a library book to read?
K: (nods)
T: Oh that's okay Nam. Did you go to the library yesterday?
K: (nods)
T: But she didn't let you bring one to school?
K: Yea. She don't want me to bring anything to school. She /tinks/ the kids are go to stole and pay the 1000 dollars.
T: What?
K: My grandma /tinks/ the kids are going to stole the library book and I will have to pay 1000 dollars.
T: Oh. Your grandma is afraid that in case you lose the book you will have to pay a lot of money for the book...
K: Yea.
T: ...that's why she doesn't want you to bring it to school?
K: Because they scared somebody took it.
T: Yes. She's afraid someone is going to take it or that you're going to lose it. That's okay Nam. That's okay, we have books in school. You can save those books when you're at home. Okay?

This unfortunate occurence for Nam is understandable on the grandparent's part. Not knowing enough about the school's culture or other people around Nam caused the grandparent anxiety about the responsibility of borrowing library books. Fortunately, this incident did have a happy ending. The following day Nam came to me and explained the compromise that they had worked out at home.

K: Hum today my grandmom go to /sopping/ because now I can bring my library book.
T: Now you can bring your library book? Oh, that's good.
K: Because my father says I have to bring two.
T: You are only allowed to bring two books to school?
K: Yea. Here. This one two about song.

Invitations: Applying Language to Real Situations

Nam's exposure to literature both in and outside of the classroom had given him a variety of resources to acquire language. However, being exposed to print did not necessarily guarantee that he would have no frustrations in using language. By being forced to use his language in order to communicate to others and to understand the rules of the classroom, he sometimes faced frustrations that forced him to learn the language as a means of survival in the class.

Each day the students were given the opportunity to choose an invitation, or activity, located in different areas around the classroom. The invitations in my classroom centered around Language Arts and Math because of the required curriculum for this summer course. The invitations included: a scrabble game, Thinkfast Math game, pick up sticks, play dough making, Geoboard, music corner, blocks, miniature pool, listening center, art, free reading, and free writing. A choice board was set up in one corner of the classroom so students could indicate their choice of invitations by placing their name tags in the appropriate invitation's pocket.

However, to prevent all students from going to the same invitations all at once, a number of ground rules were set:

1) The maximum number of people at an invitation is written on each invitation's pocket on the choice board.
2) You must put your name tag in the pocket of the invitation you would like to do for the day.
3) To allow others the opportunity to do an invitation, restrict your visits to any one invitation to 5 times until otherwise instructed.

Further, to prevent all thirty students from running up to the choice board at once and fighting for a particular invitation before the maximum amount had been reached, I divided the class into three major groups. Each group would then rotate choosing

invitations, first. That is, on Monday group 1 would be given the opportunity to choose their invitations first, followed by groups 2 and 3. On Tuesday, group 2 would have the first opportunity to choose, followed by groups 3 and 1, and so forth.

Nam happened to be in the third group to choose invitations. Thus, he had to wait until the third day before he could have a chance at playing his first choice--miniature pool. However, on the day his had the opportunity to choose first, he accidentally put his name tag in the wrong invitation pocket. Thus, when he was about ready to play pool, there were already two other boys waiting to play pool. He became very frustrated and began to cry. Though special accommodations were made to give all three children a chance to play pool for the day, Nam had to learn the unfortunate consequences for misreading information. From that day on, he went to the invitation chart before choice period to read all the pockets and decide which one he was going to choose for the day, so when it came time to put his tag in the appropriate pocket, there was no hesitation and no mistakes.

However, even if he made his mental choices ahead of time, he still ran into some problems. If he finished an activity early, he needed to choose another one before the period was over. Midway through the period many invitations had already met their maximum numbers. Thus decision-making became challenging.

K: What number...spell?
T: Spell what number? What number? I don't know what you're talking about.
K: (Raising his voice) This one! (Pointing to the number indicating the limit of people at a given invitation).
T: You want me to count the number of people at the invitation? Three people are there.
K: There are too many people already. Now what can I do?
T: There are some pockets over there that don't have any.
K: Hmmm( ) with out anything. They taking so long.
T: Yeah. They take the whole time. You had first choice today Nam. You were first. Remember?
K: Yeah but I want to play this one.
T: No. Not today. You can't do that today. Look to see what you can play today.
K: Hum can I play music?
T: Yes you can play music.

K: I am not a girl (He thinks it's a girl invitation because only girls have tried it so far."
T: It's not for girls, Nam. Music is not only for girls. It's for girls and boys. It's not just a girl thing.
K: Hmmm, maybe...maybe I play...
T: Oh what about the listening center?
K: (A girl is at that invitation) I did that 2 time already.
T: Let's look at what you've done already. Okay yo didn't do blocks; you did Geoboards; you did play dough, you didn't do scrabble; how about the listening center; reading, writing, math race, pick up sticks. Okay. You can do all those.
K: Maybe I want to do ( ).
T: Scrabble? There's a scrabble game right over here.
K: Hmmm I want to play Scraddle.
T: Go ahead...play scrabble.
K: I might play pool.
T: Pool? There's people at the pool table. You already played pool.
K: Play two time pool?
T: Yes, maybe you did play pool twice already.
K: I play one time. I never...I never...Hmmm maybe I play dis one--scraddle.
T: Okay Scrabble is right over here.
K: (Two girls are playing with the scrabble game) Hmmm maybe I do this one.
T: The blocks? You can't do the blocks today. You have to go to another one today.
K: Alright. Scraddle.

Though there were times when Nam became frustrated with doing invitations, they gave him the opportunity to learn the rules of the class through daily decision-making at invitations. Part of this frustration was Nam's preference for playmates. If he could at all help it, he preferred not to play with girls, unless as shown in the above transcript, it was his last resort.

At other times he became frustrated and angry with other students. Thus, when he tried to explain to me the situation, he was unable to communicate his thoughts successfully. At one invitation where the students would use rubber bands to make different Geoboard designs, he became upset when he felt his classmates were not sharing the Geoboards equally, and then when another student blamed him, Nam's anger grew. Tears welled up in his eyes.

K: Ms. Ching Chris say we...we were playing him. I ne'a playing him. Chris say I was playing him.

T: Chris said you were playing him?
K: Yea. I neva playing him.
T: Oh. You were not blaming him?
K: Yea.
T: Oh. Um.
S1 There's only supposed to be 4 people, but he went over. There's 5 people and there's only supposed to be 4.
K: Hum now I know it. Hum he get (these things) and then I get he was playing then he give to me.
T: Then he gave to you?
K: Mari was tooking ( ) and Mari was giving one to me.
T: Mari was giving one to you?
K: Yea.
T: That's good
K: Mari was give m-m-me...He was give m-m-m you to tell him because he give me one.
T: Mari didn't want you to tell me...
K: Yea.
T: ...So they gave you one.
K. Yea.
T: Okay. Well you have 3 now. Isn't that your 3? Okay, then that's how much you're supposed to have.
K: He was blaming me again.
T: They were what?
K: He was blaming me again.
T: Blaming you again?
K: Yea.
T: About what?
K: He saying w-w-w- you are lying to us.
T: What are you saying to them?
K: I told you are blaming me again.
T: You told them they are blaming you again?
K; Yea.

Nam's frustrations communicating with others became a frustration for his classmates as well. His heavy accent combined with the students' tolerance and patience for his continual arguing and complaining put a strain on his classmates, which affected their interaction with him.

Nam also learned the difference between "first" and "last." While waiting in line for my help one day, he kept telling the students that he wanted to go "last." So each time he said, "I want to go last," that the student would stand in line in front of him. By the time he eventually reached the front of the line he was crying. It wasn't until the other children explained what had happened that we were able to explain to him that he

was getting mixed up between "first" and "last." In the days that followed, he was sure to use the words correctly. In explaining what order he would like to share his book summary, he said, "Hum, I want to be last." Then correcting himself he said, "first."

By four weeks into the six-week summer session, Nam learned the intricacies of language and their importance in communicating with others through active participation in the various class activities. However, he still remained frustrated at various times when he was unable to understand or communicate meaning to his classmates. Thus, an even greater challenge for him was to be able to comfortably interact with his peers, to gain the voice necessary to become accepted by others so that he may enter his peers' social community.

Valuing Knowing through Multiple Ways

Though Krashen (1985) and other reading experts argue that exposure to print is the primary source for language development, I contend that exposing second language learners to sign systems [6] in addition to language, allows students to explore other communication systems in which they feel most comfortable and use these sign systems to support their language learning development. Several researchers argue that there are many ways in which we understand and make sense of our world. Gardner (1991) refers to these as "multiple intelligences"; Harste, Woodward, & Burke (1984) regard these as "multiple sign systems"; John-Steiner (1985) describe these as "languages of the mind"; and finally, Kirby & Kuykendall (1991) suggest we use multiple perspectives to view our world.

In his study of pre- and school-age children, and famous artists and thinkers of our time, Gardner (1991) argues that all people possess "multiple intelligences" (p. 11). He organizes these intelligences into seven categories: linguistic, logical-quantitative, spatial, musical, kinesthetic (the use of the body to solve problems or make things), interpersonal (understanding of other individuals), and intrapersonal (an understanding of ourselves).

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[6] Each sign system involves a sign, grammar and syntax, and is used as a mode of communication. Examples of sign systems are art, language, music, math, gesture, and drama.

Within each of these intelligences, people have all the capabilities to develop their intelligences to higher potentials. He maintains that we need to develop these intelligences by providing environments that encourage these seven multiple intelligences.

Similarly, John-Steiner examines what she refers to as "languages of the mind" (p. 81). She purports that young children's natural curiosities about our world are channeled through the body, vision, and inner voice. The "thinking of the body," she maintains, is the most basic form in which we make sense of our world. Young children learn to manipulate objects with their bodies, and different cultures use the body to bond external actions with internalized concepts. Through "language of vision," artists such as painters, film-makers, and poets possess the ability to remember visually and to know their worlds through images. Young children begin to develop this language at a very young age through scribbling and drawing. Language of the inner voice is the ability to hear one's inner speech. Writers often possess this inner speech because they are able to capture experiences through words. They are able to shift between various modes of reflection. "At any one moment," she argues, "thinking varies in the sharpness of its focus and the clarity of its intent, in its imaginal, verbal, and kinesthetic qualities" (p. 34).

Both Gardner's and John-Steiner's describe multiple ways of knowing in regards to an individual's knowledge domains. Though Harste, Woodward and Burke (1984) also contend that there are multiple ways of knowing about our world, they describe this knowledge as sign systems through which we express knowledge and meaning through multiple ways. These "multiple sign systems": language, art, music, drama, dance, and mathematics each possess its own set of grammars, including the semantics, syntactics and sign. Thus, like written language, each sign system has its own way of communicating with the world.

Though the perspectives Gardner (1991), John-Steiner (1985), Harste, Woodward and Burke (1984) differ regarding knowledge domains and sign systems, they all agree that learning is not limited to a single linguistic mode of thought and that there are

multiple ways of knowing about our world. For this reason, it is important to expose children to different forms of meaning-making and expression. Thus, the invitations in my class not only included Language Arts and Mathematics activities, the required activities for this summer school class, they also included art, music and drama. By encouraging Nam to explore sign systems in other modes of expression, he has grown as a language user by using these other modes to support his language growth.

When working on art invitations, for example, Nam began using paint, glue, glitter, cotton and pipe cleaners to make his masterpiece. Through his art, Nam's story began to emerge:

T: What is this?
K: This is a stick lunch. When a tree eat it. Would you love to eat stick lunch? [Then pointing to the cotton] It looks like a flower. [Then pointing to the glitter] It must be meat, milk, apple [Then pointing to his name] That's my name. This is called stick lunch.

Another day Nam decided to play with the Play Dough. Through his interaction with other students, he began to engage in a world of pretend play:

T: What is that?
K: This is a mushroom cookie.
T: Mushroom cookie? Yea that does look like a mushroom cookie.
S2 Why does that look like a mushroom cookie?
T: Do you see that? It looks like a mushroom, yea? [To Nam] Tell me what that is.
K: That is a mushroom.
T: Yea. that's a mushroom. These are nice mushrooms.
K: I did make it. HaDid you see what he got? He got plenty.
T: Yes, he has plenty. What is Travis doing?
K: (H)I think he is go make a lunch.
S2 Me Travis? I'm going to make a cookie.
T: You're going to make a cookie. Oh! And are you going to put things on top of your cookie?
K: Doggie cookie.
T: This is what kind of cookie?
K: My doggie cookie
T: Your doggie cookie?
S2 Right there my cookie
K: And this is my butterfly cookie.
T: Oh that's a nice butterfly.

K: See I goin'make that...And dis is my star cookie.
T Your star cookie.
S3 My broken up cookie.
K: Do you want to buy it to eat?
T: I do not want to buy that kind of cookie, Nam.
K: Mine cost 1000 dollars
T: Yourse costs 1000 dollars? I don't know if anyone is going to buy it.
S4 Mine costs 1 dollar.
T: 1 dollar? People might buy it.
S3 Ms. Ching. Mine's free.
S2 Mine is free.
K And mine is free. Mine's one thousand one hundred thousand dollar.
T: That is too expensive for a cookie.

By exploring the sign system of art, Nam was able to use the Play Dough, interact with others, and stimulate his creativity in pretend play, thus contributing to his development as a language user. These art invitations provided a low-risk environment for Nam. He felt comfortable among his peers, his anxiety level was low and his self-confidence as a language user increased. Thus, he felt comfortable taking risks while creating stories through art. As a result, his concept of story making and storytelling extended into casual conversations. One day Nam began explaining that he saw some frogs out in the playground.

K Hum I saw a frog in the yard.
T: You saw a frog in the yard?
K: Yea. Hum I not going touch it.
T You didn't go and touch it?
K Yea. He's friendly. He will go get dirty. In the play yard. He has 4 brother and 4 sister.
T: The frog? He has 4 brothers and 4 sisters?
K: Yea. I saw him playing in the yard.
T: Oh how nice.
K: Yea because they playing and find food.
T: Oh
K: If the rain go come out they are going to get up.
T: Uh-huh.
K: If the rain is strong, they cannot find food to eat.
T: Right. Right. They cannot find food to eat.
K: ( ) their food was water.
T Their food is water? Is that why it rains they find food to eat?
K: Hmm Yea. Ha lots of...lots of frogs.

I believe all Nam's experiences with print and invitations that encouraged him to explore other sign systems encouraged Nam to begin exploring the concept of story through art. What follows is a series of stories. However, what makes his story intriguing are the illustrations that accompany each story. That is, he makes intricate cut-outs on folder paper [see Appendix 1] to represent characters in each story.

K Dis the other one.
T: The little things sticking out is a spider eye.
K: Dis is the spider eye
T: Okay, people want to see on the other side of the class.
K: And is one is the bat ( )
T: That is the bat tree. (Trying to repeat so the entire class can hear).
K; Not bat tree. Bat Queen.
T: Queen. Bat Queen. I must be getting old. My hearing is getting bad.
K: And the magic ( ).
K: The magic gold.
K: The blue one.
T: The magic gold.
K: Has everyone seen it?
T: Yes. Everyone has.
S1: Nice.
S2: Too fast. You're showing it too quickly.
S3 Neat yea? How he color 'em?
S4 Yea nice
T: Okay what about your next one, Nam?
S5: How did he cut it out?
S6: Ms. Ching, how did he cut it out.
K: (a sigh)
T: You're going to have to ask him.
K: And...
S5 How did you cut it out? How did you cut it?
K: With my hand.
S5 With your hand?
T: With his hand...I think what he had to do was bend the paper and cut.
K: Yea. Yea. Like dis one. Dis one you cut down then you look at the little hole dis one. Dis one is the bat King. Bat King.
T: The bat queen and the bat king.
K: Dis is the bat queen. Dis bat. Dis is the bat. bat. small bat. Dis is th two other eagle.
T: This is an eagle and this is another eagle.
K: This is the white blue eagle.
T: The white blue eagle.
K: This hand is white and this is blue.
T: Okay.
K; And this is the orange eagle.
T: The orange eagle. Okay.
K: See. This ( ), this ( ) and his eye.

T: He has a small eye also.
K: This is um ( ) to the bat...
T: This powerful magic gold eye...
K: Yea.
T: ...is going to kill the bat?
K: Yea.

For the first time all the students were truly interested in what Nam had to share. They wanted to know how he did his artwork and what his story was all about. It was at this moment that the class showed genuine interest in Nam. Using art as his sign system for expressing his creative storytelling, Nam gained the confidence to stand in front of the class sharing a part of himself. Thus, art became his vehicle for finding his voice and gaining acceptance among his classroom community.

After this positive experience of sharing his story and artwork that helped him gain acceptance in the classroom community, Nam wanted to share more of his cut-out art. However, each story did not accompany a different page of his cut-out art. Instead, he would share one story from the front side of the page, then turn it over and tell a completely different story by using the back side of the cut-outs. The following four stories are my transcriptions of some of his cut-out art stories. For purposes of each story's flow, I have edited out my interjected remarks. These remarks were merely a repeat of what he had said to clarify his words.

Story #1 front side: (See Appendix 2)
This is about Indians. This is the King of the Indian. And this is the queen of the Indian. See? The mouth and the eyes and the gold...her hat [a gold crown]. This is the baby Indian. The baby Indian was taking a leaf to fix the father. This is big brother Indian. This is the Kind Indian.

Story #2 back side: (See Appendix 3)
This is the bat. This is only a spider. He hangs around to catch food to eat. This is a monster bat. This is the scary Indian because this is the eye and he die already. This is monster already. This is the plenty of bats because they fly.

In stories one and two, Nam begins by explaining what each cut-out is. He makes some attempt to add detail to imply a storyline, but his focus here is to describe the characters. By explaining the illustrations rather than telling the storyline, his method of explaining the particular cut-out illustrations parallel his way of summarizing published stories that he had read in and shared with the class. Nam's exposure to stories, whether stories that he had read, stories that were read to him, or stories that were orally told to him by his grandfather and others, become evident in his cut-out art stories. He has a clear idea of what characters are and that characters in stories somehow relate to each other.

Stories one and two actually use the same cut-outs; however, the first story uses the cut-outs on the front side of the page, while the second story uses the same cut-outs, but on the back side of the page. However, each story is completely different. The first one talks about Indians, while the second one talks about bats and spiders. As he told me each story, it was clear that he viewed them as completely separate stories.

In stories three and four below, Nam begins making the transition from describing his stories' illustrations to relating some of the characters to each other, then to telling his stories along a story structure framework.

Story #3 front side: (See Appendix 4)

This is a bat. See her wing here. This is the eye of good Indian. Because the bat took the big king of the bat of the eye. He took it so the bat can be saved. This is a dangerous leaf because no one can touch it because the bat hand does not have a finger. He only has a log. This is a necklace because everybody touch it and put on the head then the leaf will be broke and the bat will be broke and the Indian eye saved. Because this is the sky of the very big neck. Because this is gold and the bat scared gold because if this eye look at in gold then the bat will go broke. And the bat will be turn into the little little mouse. It will turn to be a mouse and the next month it will be a little little teeny tiny lady bug. And then the next month then the bat has no more because he's turned back to be a lady bug. Because a lady bug was eating a mouse then a mouse then the lady bug turned to be a mouse and then the mouse eating a bat and then turned into the bat.

Story #4 back side: (See Appendix 5)

The title "The Big Necklace Story Lots of the Bat." This is the log. A log for the bat to live. This is the flower. This is the rainbow flower. If anybody touches that flower they have one magic power. The purple power is the King power. And the yellow color power is the King power. Two king power. The purple king power is king and the

yellow color is queen. Because the yellow love purple. Because the purple don't love the yellow. Purple love orange. Blue love red. Purple love orange. Green love yellow. And then this is the...Hmmm I forgot to fold this one. This is the needle flower. Everybody touch this and Rainbow flower and then touch this one on it and then have two power . Because this is white love black. This is the white and the black is the King. Because the eye must be on the good king because the black must be in the...no black...oh no I write long already. It must be black love white. Because the black is the bad boy. Yah because the white must be going to this one. Because this black...the rainbow one.

This the bat sit down on the rainbow flower and then the bat will go be turn to be a good bat. If the bat will go to turn to be a good bat then he will step on this leaf then turn to be a then he will be the wing black and the white. This wing going be white color and this going be black color. Because this black and this white. This is a log. This [pointing at a different part of the cut-out] not the log. This is the log. These two not the log. Because this is a beautiful gold magic flower. This is the mountain of the red gold diamond. Because this is the bat flower. This is the mountain of the gold (inside). He has one little teeny little leaf and if the little... ( ). And then if the rainbow is going to become million hundred rainbow. Because it's a plus one and plus one and plus three and plus four and five plus six plus seven. It goes around and around the earth. Because this one go to be big enough and then this is not the one. This just a log. Because there is many, many bat inside it. And this is the bat. Now this is a beautiful magic gold magic flower. Because it's trying to be it. This only one rainbow flower. It didn't die already. He grow up to 100 years. This here grow up to 1000 year. This one grows to 100 years. Because this only little bit flower black and white. This grow for one thousand hundred years. This is the right bat.

As Nam gained more confidence in his art work as a means to express himself, his stories began to get longer and involve conflict and other story plots. Though Nam's reading and writing did improve in a print rich environment, he was not completely accepted by his classmates until he was able to capitalize on his creative strengths, expressing himself through art. Being accepted by his classmates improved his overall development, not only as a language user, but as a participant within a community of learners. While Britzman (1991) refers to teachers' voices within the community of the teaching profession, her argument about the need for voice within communities applies to Nam's situation within his classroom community:

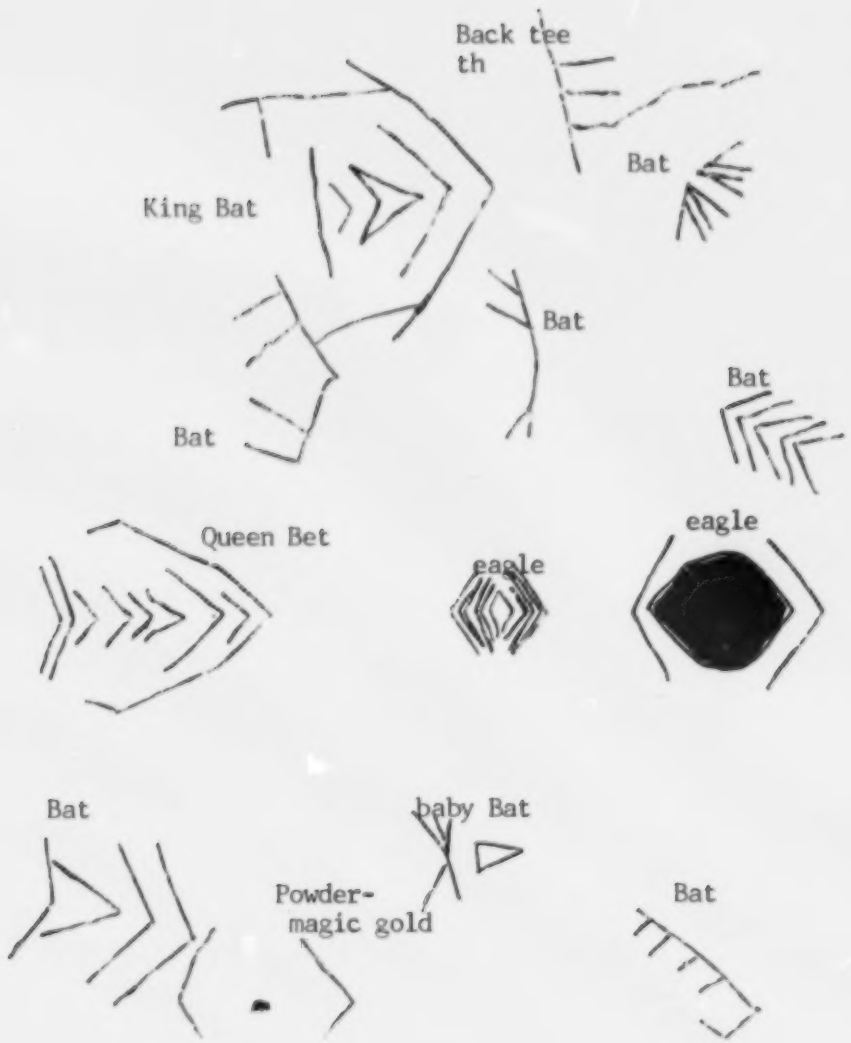
> Voice permits participation in the social world (p. 12)....The struggle for voice begins when a person attempts to communicate meaning to someone else...Voice suggests relationships: the individual's relationship to the meaning of her or his lived experience and hence to language, and the individual's relationship to the other, since understanding is social (p. 23).

Thus, for Nam, art did more than help him increase his language development through story. It also opened up a world for him to express himself and to therefore find his voice and become accepted into his social community among his peers.

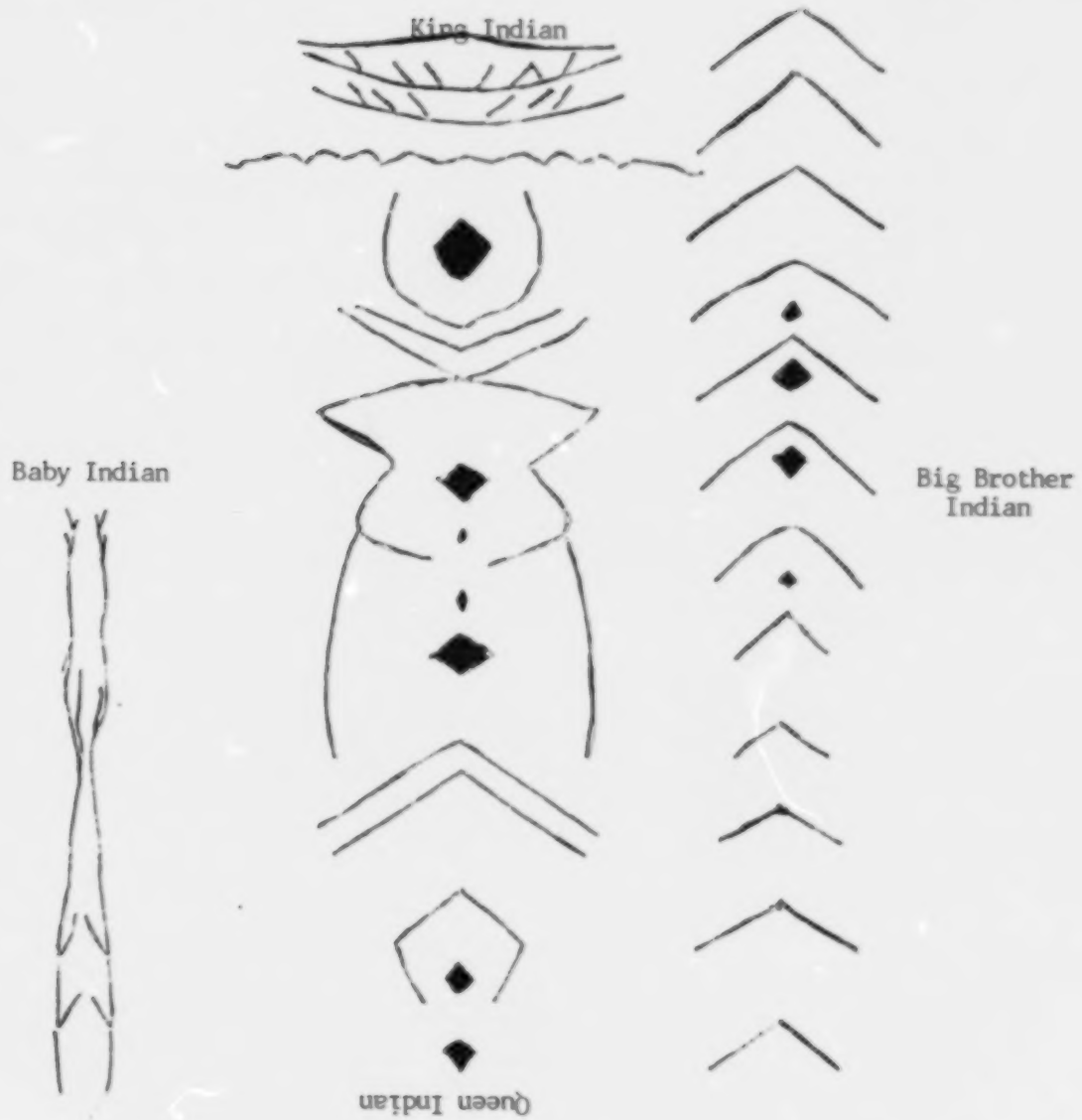
Nam approached me with his red backpack slung over both his shoulders filled with his self-authored book, treats and other books that I had given him as gifts on his last day of summer school. He hugged me, and with a big smile on his face, he said his final good-byes, "tank you." He had gained respect from his peers, and took with him the self-confidence he needed to continue creating and finding his voice among others.

We, as teachers of second language students, need to provide environments that support students' multiple ways of knowing. Because they are second language students, it is clear that they are not yet proficient at communicating through the English language. Thus, while one of our goals should be to help these students develop their English proficiencies, another important goal is to aid in their communication processes. Alternate sign systems, such as art, music, drama, dance, mathematics, and gesture, can be vehicles for supporting their communication processes. As for Nam, art became his vehicle for communicating story to his classmates, thus giving him a voice to that was heard by and accepted among his peers.

Appendix 1


Back tee
th
Bat
King Bat
Bat
Bat
Bat
Queen Bet
eagle
eagle
Bat
baby Bat
Powder-
magic gold
Bat

Appendix 2



Appendix 3

Monster Bat
spider
Old scary Indian
(A monster Indian
because he died already).
Plenty of bats
that fly.

Appendix 4

Eye of the good
Big King Indian

left Bat

Dangerous leaf

(No one can touch
because bat don't
have finger only leg.)

Necklace

Log for the
bat to live

Gold leaf inside
mountain.
1000,100 years

bat

bat

Log for the
bats to live

bat

bat

Rainbow flower
(grows to 100 years)

Right bat

Grows to 1000 years.

Big beautiful
gold magic flower

Bad boy. Black love white
Grows to 100 years.

Small beautiful
gold magic
flower. Grows
100 years.

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